

My dear Bishop Lee, Perhaps it will not be inappropriate for a daughter to give, however imperfectly, the portraiture of a Beloved Father; that whatever in his character and life bore the impress of his Maker and Redeemer, may be woven by your skillful hands into the Memorial you are good enough to undertake. The facts of his Ministerial career will be furnished you by others; what I now propose to do is to show what our Father was as a man, in his family, school, and social life.

I cannot recall the time when he was not the centre of our thoughts, our cares, our life, and our love. To please him was next to pleasing God and well I recollect the agony I experienced when a childish offence in school was punished by imprisonment in a dark closet, lest "Father should know". The darkness and disgrace were as nothing compared with his displeasure. Very early in our life (there were four of us), he began to educate our tastes as well as our minds and hearts. The journey from New York to Kentucky, in the days when much, perhaps, all of it was taken by stage coach or steamboat on the Ohio river, was enlivened by tale and song, and the wonderful skill with which he fabricated amusement out of the passing scene. It was a full life he gave us, in fact, he was our life. We were too young when our Mother was taken from us by Cholera in the summer of 1853 to realize our loss. But I can never forget our Father's image, as he supported the beloved form upon his breast, so altered by deathly pain that we almost shrank from it as from a stranger, while he drew us to her to receive the faltering words of encouragement and blessing she was able to give us. Nor the passionate grief of his last farewell of the wife of his youth, throwing himself on the floor beside the couch where she lay roped ~~and~~ wrapped for the tomb. What he was to us, father, mother, nurse and companion before her place was supplied words cannot tell. And the wonder to me now is, as I recall what all he was to us, how he could be so identified with his children's life, while pursuing the varied interests of his Diocese and Church. Everyone who knows anything of his history will recall that episode embalmed in the memories of those who loved him best, I mean the part he took in alleviating the horrors of the "Cholera Summer" in Lexington. He, with the Roman Catholic priest, Gen<sup>l</sup> Leslie Combs, and one or two physicians bore the brunt of the disease, and, day after day, he went forth leaving an anxious wife and little children, to nurse the sick, shroud and carry out the dead, and bury them in hastily prepared graves. I well remember that a young Theological Student, who was buried at the same time with our Mother, was carried to the Grave in a common cart, the hearers being elsewhere engaged, so dread was the mortality; A set of silver, engraved with the text, "I was sick and ye visited me," was the token of the appreciation of his services by the citizens of Lexington.

Coeval with our early education, came the sorrow which clouded so many of our dear father's years--and which, indeed, never left him. The sense of gratitude for confidence restored, and for the honor and reverence paid to his last years was ever on his lips and prayers. His daughters were with him when he returned from the opening services of the last Gen<sup>l</sup> Con., held in Phil., and the vehement expression of his gratitude for the long life vouchsafed him, and the vindication it had been of the charges brought against him, by those who would have put him down, was almost painful--I have heard him call them his "enemies," but without malice as without resentment. It was his Master's cause he was pleading in vindicating his own. We were too young to understand the trouble, but it has come to me in my maturer judgment, that the very richness and exuberance of his desires for the good of the Church in his Diocese, and for the cause of education, raised opposition and defeated his plans. They might have been visionary, and common natures could keep pace only with the practical, but, I am sure, as I have often heard it said, he was fifty years in advance of his time. In a journey I was privileged to take with him when he was Superintendent of Public Instruction in Ky., through the upper Counties of the State, (a blissful journey to recall, for it was taken in a buggy, behind our good Vermont horse, "Lightfoot," through a wonderfully wild and rich country) he did his work of Statistics, showing the inadequacy of the appropriation to the needs of the population, so well, that he was turned out of his office. The Administration did not want to know the truth, and he was succeeded by a man who knew what to say and what to leave unsaid. It might have been so in his Episcopal office. Believing thoroughly in the man whom he employed, he sometimes gave his confidence to men who abused it. I know he was always hampered by the prejudices of the region in which he lived. The people did not want what he had to offer. The Campbellite Church was the church of their adoption, and they saw no beauty in our beloved Zion; the institution of Slavery was dear to their hearts and their interests; their children got what

education they cared for in Roman Catholic schools; and the openness of his attacks upon lawlessness, drunkenness, and the crying sins of their young men put, at once, a barrier between the community and himself. But he lived to see prejudice softened, and to win the respect and confidence of those outsiders, who were capable of appreciating his lofty aims and blameless life. Of those within the church who misunderstood him, and conspired to ruin him, I do not wish to speak. The matle of charity was thrown over them by the pure spirit which is gone; and more than one of those who helped to bring him to trial sought his forgiveness and renewed friendship in after years. "Thou hast brought me to Great honor, and comforted me on every side," was his frequent ejaculation in later years--and, "Oh, my God, I have trusted in thee, let me not be ashamed."

In the midst of these trials, he was blessed in the surroundings of a youthful family, who looked to him for guidance and education. My step mother was, for many years, at the head of a boarding school for young ladies, which extended its beneficent influence over the South and West. You may have seen in a recent Churchman, a glowing remembrance of "Kaiorawa", from a pupil who lived to recognize the value of its teachings. In a letter from another pupil since his death, the writer says, "Truly there are some days worthy of repetition in another life, another world. I think so often of those jaunts to "Boswell's Woods," do you remember them--made a frolic of--each girl representing a planet, and revolving at suitable distances around the dear Bishop--our Son--how he laughed, and turned us down, or hurried us up; and how free we all were with him, and how good and patient he was. His love of Nature was a passion, and, I think of all we owe him, no inheritance is dearer than the memories associated with out-door life--the woods--the wild flowers--the trees--and, above all, the sky. Surely, these lessons will be renewed and expanded in that state of existence in which our powers will be as boundless as Eternity, and we shall know better how to praise and bless God for all his works!

More than one Church edifice in Ky. speaks of our Father's tastes for architecture. He would cut and fashion the model with his pen-knife to the minutest details, the miniature church being not only a miracle of beauty and proportion, but, I think, a sure guide to the builder, the technicalities as thoroughly correct as those of a professional artist. I can recall his enthusiasm over the Cathedrals of England; and he went off to the Continent "Cathedral hunting," as he called it, his ignorance of the French and German languages leading to some funny adventures. There exist now, models of niches and shrines, copied from foreign churches, exquisite in their workmanship, the work of his hands, on his return--tangible memories, we might call them, of the beauty which enchanted him. Throughout the Diocese, he was familiarly known as the "Whittling Bishop," bows and arrows, darts, etc., from his skillful hands made glad the hearts of the little ones.

I feel that I am encroaching on your time and patience, my dear friend, in recording these--a few of the thousand memories that crowd upon me as I write. There are others-- His noble defense of liberty, during the Rebellion, when his uncompromising attitude drew upon him the hatred and vituperation of excited passion, threatening his very office, the heroic mould of his nature making him almost court opposition--the tenacity with which he held his convictions when once founded on the basis of truth and reason--his Catholic embrace of the whole wide world of religion and literature--his interest in political issues, and his intense belief in the triumph of good, even when clouds were the darkest. Very often have we heard him utter the sentiment that this was a beautiful world, in which there existed more good than evil, more beauty than deformity, more innocent than noxious animals and plants. His lip would tremble, and his eye moisten at the announcement of some heroic deed, or the knowledge of an act of Generous self denial in private life.

In a record kept by one of his daughters, the last summer of his life, is this entry. "Yesterday, father put into my hands a notebook, beautifully and carefully kept, in which were recorded his Ministerial acts and the sermons, numbered, which he preached in a year. The reading of the names of the baptized, married and buried awakened memories of his Ministry in Marblehead and Virginia. They were summed up in these words--"I desire to thank God for three supreme mercies of my life--First, for giving me a Saintly Mother; next, for having called me by His Grace to the Sacred Ministry; and, lastly, that he has blessed me with a cheerful, hopeful Faith, which has enabled me to rise above the present clouds and darkness, and to see

better days in the future." Speaking of the too common practice among clergymen of seeking change and perferment by efforts of their own, he said--"My instructions to the Theological Students under my care, were never to bring about a change by their own action;--to labor to fill their office in the station God had assigned them, to fill it to overflowing, and a blessing would surely follow either there or in a large field." There are other recorded words, showing his interest in the Queen, in the Jews, Roman Catholics, etc.--but this imperfect sketch must come to a close.-- The end was very near, even then, and after a winter of more than usual quiet, and a gradual discontinuance of his habits of systematic reading and writing, his increasing muscular weakness showed itself in a fall in his study, to which he would always find his way, whatever had been the disturbance of his night-- He went to bed, and felt himself "very near the confines of the other world"--to use his own words--altho' after that, I believe, you met him at Bp. Potter's, at the election of bishops for China and Africa, and in his own house, broke to him the bread of life. This was on Thursday--on Saturday he married a great niece, who came to him for the ceremony, and the double strain was too much for his enfeebled frame. The fine weeks in Oct. which followed, were brightened by cheerful patience under suffering, and a grateful sense of the blessing of having his children and Grandchildren to minister to him. "I never saw such a deathbed," was the testimony of a niece.

His last articulate words were a pleasantry, and or he fell asleep, after a hard fight,--a noble victory won through "him who loved him, and gave himself for him."

L. S.  
1884

#### NOTES (Compiled by Eugene Hester Thompson, Jr.):

The original manuscript document from which the above was transcribed must have been written in the summer of 1884 by Elizabeth ("Lizzie") Smith, the third daughter of the first bishop of Kentucky, and is now (1955) in the possession of Mrs. Ewing Lloyd Hardy, a great granddaughter (who kindly lent it to me); it would appear to be either a first draft or a copy of the actual letter sent to Bishop Alfred Lee, of Delaware, who used it in the study of Bishop Smith's life and Ministry which was published with the Diocesan Journal and also as a separate pamphlet (John F. Morton, Louisville, 1884), and is written on sixteen sheets of note-book paper measuring 14.15 by 22.4 cm., with holes at the top 3.5 and 10.5 cm. from the left edge.

Page 1, line 13:--The four children were; Louisa Howe (16 Oct. 1819--30 Mar. 1903), Virginia (25 Apr. 1822--30 June 1896), Elizabeth (17 Apr. 1824--4 Feb. 1920), and Samuel Bosworth (16 Nov. 1825--3 Nov. 1866). Three other children (Benjamin Bosworth, Herbert Marshall, and Ann Herbert) died in infancy.

Line 20:--Elizabeth Bosworth, the Bishop's first wife, who was also his first cousin, was born 29 Dec. 1795 in Bristol, Rhode Island, and died 22 June 1853, in Lexington, Kentucky, during the Cholera.

Line 40:--The theological student who died was apparently William Douglas. (See page 66 in Robert Peter's history of the Medical Department at Transylvania University. Filson Club Publication; 1905.)

Line 45:--For an account of the trial, see the Rev. Robert Insko's study in the Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church for June 1953, pages 167-174.

Line 50:--The thirty-fourth General Convention was held from the third through the twenty-sixth of October, 1883, in Philadelphia.

Line 63:--Governor Charles A. Wickliffe appointed Bishop B. Smith as Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1840; he was the third to hold that office and served two years. The fourth Superintendent was the Rev. George W. Brush, a Methodist, who served during 1842-1843.

Line 75:--It is perhaps interesting to note that a Great, Great, Great Granddaughter of Alexander Campbell married a Great, Great Grandson of Bishop Smith, Benjamin Bosworth Hardy.

Page 2, line 16:--The step-mother of the letter-writer, the second wife of Bishop Smith, was Mrs. Harriet Loundes Douglas, daughter of Seth Perkins Staples, founder of the Yale Law School, and widow of the Rev. Sutherland Douglas. She died 4 November 1878 in New York.

Line 18:--The Churchman, Vol. 49 (June 21, 1884), p. 697, contains an article on "The Late Bishop Smith" by R. H. K.

Line 40:--Bishop and Mrs. Smith went to Europe in 1857. (See A Series of Letters from London, by George Mifflin Dallas, I, p. 181.)

Line 72:--Bishop Smith's mother was Ruth Bosworth; she was born 28 July, 1760, and died 28 March 1823, in Bristol, R. I.

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